

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. **(Currently Amended)** A sustained-release preparation which comprises a drug and a gelatin hydrogel,

wherein the drug is impregnated into said gelatin hydrogel through a surface thereof and is maintained in said hydrogel by physiochemical interaction, and

wherein a concentration gradient of the drug is formed in the hydrogel, said concentration gradient being higher at said surface than in other parts of said hydrogel, and said sustained-release preparation is sterile.

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Currently Amended)** A method of sustained release of a drug in vivo comprising administering a sustained-release preparation to a patient in need thereof, said preparation comprising a drug and a gelatin hydrogel, wherein a concentration gradient of the drug is formed in the hydrogel, wherein degradation of the gelatin hydrogel *in vivo* causes more drug to be released from a region with higher drug concentration, thereby giving said sustained release of the drug, wherein the drug is impregnated into said gelatin hydrogel through a surface thereof and is maintained in said hydrogel by physiochemical interaction, said concentration gradient

being higher at said surface than in other parts of said hydrogel, and said sustained-release preparation is sterile.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 3, where said administration is topical.
5. **(New)** The sustained-release preparation of claim 1, wherein the drug is impregnated into said gelatin hydrogel by ionic bonding.
6. **(New)** The sustained-release preparation of claim 1, wherein the preparation is in solid or semi-solid form.